

## Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District  
Ranking Democrat, House Small Business Committee



## Town Halls Helped Prepare for NYCHA Hearing

### Concerned residents confront housing agency's plans

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez hosted a series of town hall meetings to discuss the New York City Housing Authority's plan for the coming year, including one at the Church of the Open Door. The meetings were designed to prepare the community for a NYCHA hearing August 21 that the agency held on its plan.



Congresswoman Velázquez addresses a town hall meeting at the Church of the Open Door to prepare for the NYCHA hearing.

Housing residents were concerned about several NYCHA proposals for the coming year.

One is the community service requirement mandated by federal law that will impose unpaid work on unemployed housing residents who are not in school.

NYCHA also proposes to change how rent in public housing is determined. NYCHA is moving toward a flat rent system, where residents are vulnerable to rent hikes next year.

Finally, NYCHA would like to promote "deconcentration of poverty" by encouraging higher-income families to move to public housing. But this could be done at the expense of those families most in need of public housing.

Congresswoman Velázquez met with residents at the Church of the Open Door and led a march to the August 21 NYCHA hearing to make sure all views were heard.

## Rally Protests Garment Worker Sweatshop Conditions

### Coalition opposes exploitation of low-wage factory workers

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez joined the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Workers (UNITE) to protest sweatshop conditions in factories that manufacture top fashion brands.

She even cut up her Banana Republic card to oppose companies who profit from clothes made by garment workers who are poorly paid, overworked and often forced to live where they work. Factory owners regularly block unions formed to protect workers' rights.

"Shame on you," Congresswoman Velázquez said outside the store. "Banana Republic, Ann Taylor, we are watching you. We will hold you accountable."

UNITE announced a web site for consumer news about fashion retailers and sweatshop conditions that can be viewed on the World Wide Web at [www.behindthelabel.org](http://www.behindthelabel.org).



Congresswoman Velázquez joins a rally protesting the treatment of garment workers who produce some of the top fashion brands.



# Velázquez Urges Investigation of Police Practices

Community is worried after alleged DWI death in Sunset Park



Congresswoman Velázquez discusses the alleged DWI deaths of the Herrera family with the news media last month.

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez joined community activists calling for an investigation of the police after deaths caused by an officer allegedly driving drunk on his way to work.

Maria Herrera, who was eight months pregnant, her four-year-old son Andy and her sister Dilcia, 16, died when a car driven by officer Joseph Gray crashed into them as they crossed a street in Sunset Park on Aug. 4. Maria’s husband, Victor, survived.

It was reported that Gray had a blood-alcohol rate of twice the legal limit, that he was drinking at the station house after his shift and that he was drinking at a strip club just before the deaths occurred.

“We mourn the loss of the Herrera family,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “We call on the City to investigate police practices that may indicate Officer Gray’s conduct is not isolated.”

## New Day Care Center to Open at Brooklyn Navy Yard

Former Marine Commandant’s home will host 90 children

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez attended the groundbreaking of a new day care center for workers at the Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park.

Councilman Ken Fisher and Assemblyman Joe Lentol helped secure the \$1.7 million needed to complete the day care center.

When completed in 2002, the center will be able to take care of up to 90 children. The center will be built into the fully refurbished former Marine Commandant’s home on the old military base. It will comply with all safety and health requirements.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard was once one of the country’s largest military facilities. Converted to civilian use in the 1970s, it hosts 3,500 jobs in 200 businesses.



Congresswoman Velázquez helps break ground at the new Brooklyn Navy Yard Child Day Care Center last month.

## Velázquez Backs Medicare Prescription Drug Benefits

Thirty-six-year-old program needs update for the modern age



Medicare marked its 36th birthday last month. One group gave 535 cakes to Congress — the “missing piece” is drug benefits!

Medicare turned 36 years old last month. The program that provides health insurance to senior citizens has changed some during that time, but not enough — especially when it comes to prescription drug benefits.

As a result, more seniors are paying expensive drug costs out of their own pockets. These costs increased 30 percent between 1981 to 1999. Often that chews up most of a monthly \$780 Social Security check.

Congresswoman Velázquez is fighting for increased Medicare benefits. She cosponsored H.R. 1400, the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act, and H.R. 1512, the Medicare Extension of Drugs to Seniors (MEDS) Act. Both bills would provide substantial drug price reductions for Medicare beneficiaries.

### Grants Awarded to Our Community

Community School District 15.....\$7,338,813	Community School District 20.....\$7,199,505
Supports 3-year Magnet education programs	Supports 3-year Magnet education programs